DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 366 482 RC 019 467

AUTHOR Larsen, Eric
TITLE A Survey of the Current Status of Rural Education Research (1986-1993).
PUB DATE Dec 93
NOTE 16p.
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Educational Change; *Educational Equity (Finance); *Educational Policy; Educational Practices; *Educational Research; Elementary Secondary Education; *Equal Education; Government Role; Literature Reviews; Research Needs; *Rural Education; Rural Urban Differences

ABSTRACT

This report reviews research on rural education produced between 1986 and 1993. The review focuses on equity of educational opportunity; financial, curricular, and staffing issues; research agendas; and educational reform. The literature demonstrates that educational opportunity for rural school populations often is substandard, especially when compared to those in urban settings. The difficulties involved in achieving educational equity in rural areas include eliminating disparity in educational funding, reaching an agreement on what constitutes a rural school district, and finding alternative ways to provide educational services to special student populations. Frequently cited as a major problem is the recruitment, training, and retention of teachers in rural school districts. This is compounded by geographic isolation for both teachers and administrators in rural areas. Another concern is the need for school personnel to receive additional training to increase awareness of rural school and community relations. In recent years, the U.S. Department of Education has established a commitment to promote educational parity in rural schools. To strengthen this commitment, the federal government must establish research priorities through the development of empirical databases on rural education policy and practice. Current research on rural education reveals that most, if not all, of the solutions provided by educational policymakers fail to recognize the unique differences and needs of rural settings. Contains 47 references. (LP)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 366 482

A SURVEY OF THE CURRENT STATUS OF RURAL EDUCATION RESEARCH (1986-1993)

By Eric Larsen

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Eric LArsen

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

RC019467

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Abstract

Despite the fact that almost half of America's public schools are currently located in rural areas, educational research continues to be primarily devoted to urban school issues and concerns. However, in the recent past a viable literature on rural education has begun to emerge. Intended primarily for educators and policymakers, this review of the current research on rural education will focus on the scholarly treatment devoted to those entities denoted as nonmetropolitan (rural) as opposed to those designated as metropolitan (urban).

Although the history of American educational research has primarily focused on urban issues and concerns, rural schools continue to play a central role in American education and community life. Indeed, perhaps as many as one half of all American public schools are currently found in what are defined as rural areas of the United States. However, up until the mid to late 1980's, the brunt of educational research continued to focus on the urban school setting, effectively ignoring its rural counterpart. Finally addressing this problem in 1987, Congress directed that the country's nine regional educational laboratories begin to develop more equitable policies for rural education. In addition, the United States Department of Education is now becoming more involved with the creation and maintenance of rural education policy (Lewis, 1993). Because of this increased interest and involvement on the federal level, a variety of research and policy initiatives have begun to emerge about American rural schools. This broadening interest has also spawned a diverse literature which deals with the issues and problems in rural education. The purpose of this literature review will be to survey the research on rural education produced between 1986 and the present and to offer some interpretation as to the significance of this body of scholarship. Befitting an integrated review of research, the materials examined will include books, governmental reports and publications, monographs, journal articles and a dissertation. This scholarship will be discussed in terms of four interrelated categories: equality of educational opportunity; financial, curricular and staffing issues; research agendas; and educational reform. While the literature reviewed here will include only scholarship produced since 1986, an attempt will be made to identify current themes and practices which have antecedents in past research efforts.

Equal Opportunity

The current research on rural education continues to demonstrate that educational

RC 019467

opportunity for rural school populations is often substandard, especially when compared to that of urban settings. Although America was initially a rural, agrarian society dominated by small farmers, public education policy has steadily adopted a more urban interest as the country's landscape became more and more urbanized. More importantly, this attitude has resulted in greater funding for metropolitan schools than for those located in rural areas. Further complicating the problem is the fact that policymakers frequently do not even agree on what constitutes a rural school district. At the moment, the most common definition belongs to the U.S. Bureau of the Census: a town or county is considered rural if it possesses a population of less than 2500 (Lewis,1993). A population based definition, however, can lead to misleading representations when dealing with population densities, for example, or metropolitan areas that have large rural landscapes just beyond city limits. Ironically, the present disagreement over definition has resulted in stronger efforts to develop stricter guidelines for rural issues and concerns as public education has become increasingly urbanized (Nachtigal, 1992). Eventually, the confusion over rurality will ease as the National Center for Educational Statistics, in collaboration with the U.S. Bureau of the Census, completes a computerized mapping process which will more clearly delineate the boundaries between urban, suburban and rural school districts (Lewis, 1993). This is seen as a timely if not overdue activity as much of the current research on rural education continues to be concerned with developing ways to classify the nation's rural school districts in order to lessen inequities. Stephens (1992) identifies four primary issues which must be analyzed if researchers are to properly assess and evaluate rural schools and their unique needs: definitional; conceptual; methodological; policy application. Ultimately this construct for analyzing data could be used by policymakers and educators alike to ensure educational equity in rural settings. Both Elder (1992) and Reeder (1992) have recently proposed typologies for classifying rural school districts, a classification system which would allow researchers as well as policymakers to define rural school districts by distinct types. Elder's effort, for example, identifies rural districts by influential businesses, settlement size and proximity to urban areas whereas Reeder compares the strength and weaknesses of economic, social and fiscal indicators. Stephens (1992) has also proposed what he

considers successful strategies for creating and sustaining equity in rural school districts. The intent here, as with other researchers (Bhaerman, 1992), is to eventually produce "policy impact codes" which reflect the current affect policymaking is having on rural schools. The use of such codes would help in assessing and evaluating the effectiveness of special assistance to rural school districts. To this end, Stephens identifies four criteria for evaluating such codes: equity; adequacy; responsiveness; and appropriateness. Bhaerman (1992) concludes that researchers should demand panels of "federal, state and other experts to consider both policy and technical questions if we are to move forward in establishing a truly useful classification system and policy impact code" (Bhaerman,93).

Current studies of minority and disabled rural school populations, as with those of the past, suggest that researchers must continue to focus on community context if they are to fully comprehend how nonurban schools operate. Typically, research in this area has focused on staffing needs or expanded funding formulas to better serve rural districts. Currently, there are a number of studies which address the issue of service delivery to special student populations of rural schools (Baumeister and Morris, 1992; Rojewski, 1992; Capper, 1990). The interest in this issue is heightened by the estimate that over one million children with disabilities currently reside in rural areas (Smith, Fasser et al., 1992). The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act of 1990 (P.L. 94-142) also mandates that children with disabilities be provided a free public education, a requirement that rural schools often find more difficult to meet than their urban counterparts. This difficulty in part stems from the notion that American public education has historically developed as a response to the needs of the urban school. Special populations in rural areas, however, frequently have specific educational needs not found in urban settings and therefore not provided by traditional funding formulas and delivery models. For example, current policies often "fail to take into account local system factors that affect a school's capacity to improve" (Hannaway and Talbert,165). Larsen and Foley (1992), for instance, note the importance of providing rehabilitative services which are specifically designed for the rural environment in which they are to be utilized. In many rural areas, special education teachers are shared within the district, limiting

the amount of time spent with individual students. As rural special education students frequently interact with school personnel more than older adults, the need to network in rural areas becomes crucial to the process of providing equal educational opportunity. Current research continues to indicate that rural school districts must find alternative ways to provide educational services to disabled students. The Committee on the Status of Racial Minorities (1987), for example, has proposed a preservice training program for speech pathology instructors which utilizes an alternative curriculum to work with rural students with communication disorders. Campbell (1992), however, cautions that "such training needs to reflect changing demographics and economic trends of society in terms of meeting the needs of the service population (Campbell, 28).

Much of the current scholarship in rural education research also continues to focus on cultural minority issues, perhaps because the United State's population remains one of the world's most culturally diverse. Multiculturalism specifically impacts rural education because many rural school personnel understand that the key to understanding others is developing an awareness of one's own culture (Oliver, 1992). This principle has been advocated most successfully by the Foxfire Network (Wiggington, 1985). Current research also exhibits a growing realization that rural blacks and Hispanics experience inequitable opportunities in both community and school settings (Lyson,1990). Adult literacy in rural communities also remains a persistent concern. Although research has shown that adult illiteracy is highest in rural areas, current research (Ferrel and Howley, 1990) indicates that literacy programs have had a limited effect on adult literacy rates in rural areas (Ferrel and Howley ,371).

Staffing, Administration and Funding

Research in rural education continues to focus on staffing, administrative and funding issues with primary attention given to the development of curriculum and instruction in rural schools. Recruitment, training and retention of instructors, for example, is frequently cited in the literature as a major problem in rural school districts (Bainer,1992; Luhman and Fundis, 1989). Rural school staff are also frequently called upon to fill multiple roles in rural schools, duties for which their college preparation programs did not prepare them. It is also well documented (Bainer,

1992) that rural school instructors "seem to experience more problems with student success, both academic and social, and with pupil control" (Bainer, 3). Mandolang (1989) argues that geographic location, especially as it relates to rural districts, should become a major determinant for educational policymaking, primarily because of the diversity in urban, suburban and rural perspectives. Her study, which focused on teacher job satisfaction in the State of Florida, suggests that rural teachers require different occupational incentives and professional development to fulfill their needs and aspirations than those instructors working in urban and suburban settings.

Surprisingly, the recent research literature on rural education does not exhibit a strong interest in how school leaders become more involved in rural issues and concerns. Hurley (1992) observes that his study of rural high school principals demonstrates that rural schools tend to "socialize principals into instructional leadership roles" (Hurley,20). However, one of the biggest problems rural schools experience with respect to leadership roles is the fact that school sites are frequently geographically isolated from one another. Garber (1992) suggests that rural school leaders expand their networking with other educational professionals in similar roles to counteract the problems produced by isolation. On the other hand, there does seem to be an interest by current researchers in the role the local school board can play in rural areas. According to Van Alfen (1992), school boards can become more effective policymakers in small rural districts by cultivating relationships among educational professionals, parents, community and business leaders, in effect "empowering" these stakeholders. Schmuck and Schmuck (1992) further suggest that rural school district boards of education have a unique opportunity to do more than just set policy. They argue that if school improvement efforts are to reach the classroom, there must be more collaboration and cooperation among all stakeholders. Van Alfen (1992) also notes that policymaking which is bottom up in nature and involves all stakeholders can help to promote curricular growth.

School personnel may also need additional training to develop and increased awareness of school and community relations in rural areas. Although rural schools in general tend to do an adequate job of providing quality academic programs, and retention rates are high, the fact remains

that a disproportionate number of high school dropouts come from rural areas. Educational professionals generally cite changing family and community demographics, which are particularly prevalent in rural areas, as the primary reasons. Lichter et al., (1993) suggest that "rural children's experience with poverty appears to matter more" (Lichter et al., 71.) although family background must also be acknowledged as part of the problem. Current research also indicates that teachers who collaborate with colleagues, network and learn to use technological resources can enrich the curriculum, especially in the sciences and foreign language areas (Luhman and Fundis,1989).

Educational Research Agenda

During the past decade, research on the specific problems and issues in rural education has developed focus and become much more prevalent. The primary reason for researchers' increased interest is the federal government's expanded role. In 1991, the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) published and disseminated *An Agenda for Research and Development of Rural Education* which identifies six priorities for rural education research. The topics cover school effectiveness; curricular provisions; school-community partnerships; human resources; use of technology; and finance and governance issues. By publishing this agenda for rural education research, the United States' Department of Education established a strong commitment to promoting educational parity in rural schools. Nevertheless, what continues to be sorely missed in rural education research is the development of empirical databases on rural education policy and practice. Helge's (1986) ambitious study represents the first comprehensive national effort to derive an empirical data base for establishing rural education research priorities. One of the key indicators the study generated was that rural education researchers were very much in agreement as to what needs to be examined and changed to promote rural education research and reform. According to Barker and Chance (1992), the study also reaffirms the expressed goals of the National Rural Education Association (NREA) which seeks to "encourage the collection and dissemination of...statistical data and other appropriate information relating to rural education" (Barker and Chance, 4). However, while an increasing number of researchers are working with rural education issues, the state of knowledge and information available on the subject remains

fragmented. Stephens and Perry (1991) characterize the current data base as insufficient and believe that the federal government should be primarily responsible for collecting data and developing policy response. Despite the efforts at the federal level, rural schools remain threatened by consolidation and centralization, and urban schools continue to get a bigger share of the school finance budget. Lutz (1991) attributes these organization and funding dilemmas to the interests of present-day public education policymakers who still view all schools from an urban perspective. Even though there are many who advocate consolidation and centralization of small rural schools, the sheer number of these facilities will probably keep them around for at least the near future. But singular policies will not serve to protect and enhance all small rural schools. What is required is the development of multiple policies which create and sustain new techniques and innovative approaches within the traditional setting (Shimmons, 1993).

Educational Reform

Obviously, school reform efforts must continue if our nation's children are to receive adequate educational training. However, Helge (1992) notes that the majority of "recent proposals indicate a lack of awareness of rural communities and their schools as well as how reform is and is not possible in rural communities" (Helge, 2). McGranahan (1991) observes that "education's potential as a local area rural development strategy is probably quite limited" McGranahan, 4). What would probably lessen more problems in rural education than anything else would be significant steps taken toward a reformed funding formula(s) for rural schools and districts. But providing more money for rural schools will require increased funding levels by state governments (Verstegen,1991) and in times of budgetary crisis, this does not seem likely to happen. Reforms that have appeared also continue to exhibit urban biased responses to problems that continue to plague rural schools (Lutz, 1990). What is needed, then, are supplemental funding initiatives for rural schools. Howley (1993) notes that the generally positive relationship rural communities share with their schools may in the future contribute to the development of such alternative approaches to current methods of state and local funding.

Perhaps no educational reform within the recent past has received as much attention as the

1990 Kentucky Educational Reform Act (KERA), a reform which grew out of substantial inequalities in the funding of pupils and resources in poor Kentucky school districts (Goetz and Debertin, 1991). Funding issues remain extremely important to rural areas because school districts in these regions tend to have low enrollment numbers. Like many other rural communities across the nation, funding of public education in Kentucky's nonmetropolitan regions had not traditionally been a high priority. However, the KERA has increased the amount of per pupil funding notoriously underfunded school districts now receive. Rural education reformers also hope that KERA will ultimately lead to school districts being granted more freedom and autonomy in making their own decisions. If nothing else, rural education researchers hope that KERA may have at least succeeded in making legislators more aware of how damaging mass funding formulas are to rural districts.

Current research on educational reform also demonstrates that vocational training interests and economic development themes remain popular in rural educational research. Watson (1993) identifies North Carolina's Family Specialist Training Project as a model for responding to early intervention rural program needs. Although studies of similar in-service training programs are perhaps not as numerous as one might expect given the interest in special population research, Watson's study does indicate this program will increase the quality of services delivered to special needs populations in rural communities. Ironically, though reform must impact the entire educational system, rural researchers are quick to note that America's rural diversity must not be inhibited or destroyed by this process (Helge, 1992). As one researcher observed, "rural schools are also the glue that holds rural communities together" (Lewis, 6). In order to preserve this delicate balance, policies must be developed that preserve the unique qualities of rural schools while addressing the needs of individual community school systems.

Summary and Discussion

The current research on rural education indicates that most if not all of the solutions provided by today's educational policymakers typically do not recognize the unique differences and needs required in rural settings. In order to successfully challenge policymakers' urban bias, rural

interests must begin to impact at the national level as well as state and local levels. At this point in time, rural education interests are beginning to receive more recognition from policymakers, particularly governmental groups. However, developing ways to positively influence rural education has become more problematic as control of our schools has moved from local to state and federal levels. The distance created among policymakers by this shift in governance has resulted in reforms which too often view all schools as alike, a problem which continues to hinder rural school reforms. On the other hand, current school improvement initiatives which promote the establishment of partnerships between all stakeholders do hold promise for rural settings. Site-based management and grassroot efforts at the local level may help compensate for present policies which in the past have had negative impacts on rural schools. For example, involving all stakeholders in the process of constructing budgets and hiring personnel would promote community solidarity, a prime component of small, homogeneous rural communities. Ironically, there is some research which substantiates the view that rural schools in the future could become models of success for their larger urban and suburban counterparts (Luhman & Fundis, 1989; Reck, 1990). In these studies, the characteristics of small rural schools were found to be advantageous in creating successful programs and practices. Educational researchers who continue to examine rural school issues and concerns may also identify problems and create solutions for problems which currently reside in urban and suburban settings also. Current researchers also seem to be devoting more attention to considering strategies for dealing with economic, health care and educational issues within rural communities (Lutfiyya, 1993). The intent here, however, must be in developing programs that provide long-term benefits rather than simply implementing quick fix solutions.

As this review has pointed out, the current research on rural education demonstrates that the problems associated with this field are complicated and increasing. However, the latest wave of scholarship continues to identify many of the same themes delineated by prior research efforts, a happenstance which may eventually lead to substantive changes in rural schools. Although current research efforts are not limited to specific areas, the majority of scholarly efforts have concerned

themselves with equality of educational opportunity, funding inequities, and curricular issues in rural schools. The importance of rural context to research continues to emerge as a new research question, perhaps most identifiable in efforts to correlate the role of the school and community life. Increased governmental interest in rural issues and concerns has also precipitated expanded research efforts. In the future, the challenge to researchers will be to not only identify problems but also to present rational solutions that encourage as well as support rural education reform.

REFERENCES

Barker, Bruce & Chance, Edward. (1992,Winter). A Description of National Rural Education Association Sponsored Research Activities. Rural Educator,14 (2), 4-8.

Barker, Bruce & Muse, Ivan. (1986, Spring). One Room Schools of Nebraska, South Dakota, California and Wyoming. Research in Rural Education,3 127-130.

Bhaerman, Robert D. (1992). More Questions Than Answers: A Response to Stephens, Reeder and Elder. Journal of Research in Rural Education,8 (3), 71-73.

Bainer, Deborah L. (1992, Winter). Problems of Rural Elementary School Teachers. The Rural Educator,14 (2), 1-3.

Baumeister, Mary & Morris, Randall K. (1992, Summer). Rural Delivery Model for Vocational Education. Teaching Exceptional Children,24 (4), 40-43.

Campbell, Lynda R. (1992). Meeting the Speech and Language Needs of Minority Children in Rural Settings. Rural Special Education Quarterly,11 (2), 26-30.

Capper, Colleen A. (1990). Students in Low-Incidence Disabilities in Disadvantaged Rural Settings. Exceptional Children,56 (4), 338-344.

Committee on the Status of Racial Minorities. (1987). Rockville, MD: Multicultural Professional Education in Communication Disorders: Curriculum Approaches. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

DeYoung, Alan J. (Ed.). (1991). Rural Education: Issues and Practice. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Elder, William L. (1992). The Use of Census Geography and County Typologies in the Construction of Classification Systems for Rural Schools and Districts. Journal of Research in Rural Education,8 (3), 47-68.

Ferrell, Susan T. & Howley, Aimee. (1991). Adult Literacy in Rural Areas. Journal of Reading,34 (5), 368-372.

Garber, Darrell H. (1992, Winter). Staying in Touch: The Rural Principal's Network. The Rural Educator,14 (2), 13-15.

Goetz, Stephan & Debertin, David. (1991). Rural Education and the 1990 Kentucky Educational Reform Act: Funding, Implementation and Research Issues. Agricultural Economics Research Report 54, Department of Agricultural Economics, College of Agriculture, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY., 1-30.

Hannaway, Jane & Talbert, Joan E. (1993). Bringing Context Into Effective Schools Research: Urban-Suburban Differences. Educational Administration Quarterly,29 (2), 164-186.

Helge, Doris. (1992). Implementing Education Reform Proposals in Rural Areas. Rural Special Education Quarterly, 11 (2), 2-3.

Helge, Doris. (1986). Establishing an Empirically Determined National Rural Education Research Agenda. Research in Rural Education,3 (3), 99-105.

Helge, Doris. (1988, Summer). Serving At-Risk Populations in Rural America. Teaching Exceptional Children,20 (4), 17-18.

Howley, Craig. (Dec., 1988). Economic Support for Education in Rural School Districts. (Digest No. EDO-RC-89-4). ERIC/Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, Charleston, WV.

Howley, Craig. (March, 1989). The Impact of Rural Industries on the Outcomes of Schooling in Rural America. (Digest No. EDO-RC-89-7). ERIC/Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, Charleston, WV.

Hurley, J. Casey. (1992). The Organizational Socialization of Rural High School Principals: Teacher Influences. Journal of Research in Rural Education,8 (2), 20-31.

Larsen, Carmen & Foley, Jeffrey C. (1992, Spring). Rural Issues in Rehabilitation Service Delivery. American Rehabilitation, 30-38.

Lewis, Anne C. (1993). Rural Schools: On the Road to Reform. Council for Educational Development and Research, The Regional Educational Laboratories, Washington, D.C.

Lichter, D., Cornwell, G., & Eggebeen, D. J. (1993). Harvesting Human Capital: Family Structure and Education Among Rural Youth. Rural Sociology,58 (1), 53-75.

Luhman, Anna & Fundis, Ronald. (April, 1989). Building Academically Strong Gifted Programs in Rural Schools. (Digest No. EDO-RC-89-3). College Studies for the Gifted, Fort Hays State University, Fort Hays, KS. (ERIC/Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, Charleston, WV.

Lutfiyya, M. Nawal. (March, 1993). Integrated Services: A Summary for Rural Educators. (Digest No. EDO-RC-92-9). Appalachia Educational Laboratory, ERIC/Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, Charleston, WV.

Lutz, Frank. (Sept., 1990). Trends and Options in the Reorganization or Closure of Small or Rural Schools and Districts. (Digest No. EDO-RC-90-11). Commerce, TX: East TexasState University, Center for Policy Studies and Research in Elementary and Secondary Education. ERIC/Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, Charleston, WV.

Lutz, F., Lutz, S. & Tweeddale, P. (1992). Rural Education: A kinder, Gentler World. Journal of Rural and Small Schools, 5 (1), 48-55.

Lyson, Thomas. (1990,August). Down and Out in Rural America: The Status of Blacks and Hispanics in the 1980's. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Rural Sociological Society, Norfolk, VA.

Mandolang, Nadine. (1988). Rural Education Policy: A Comparison of Patterns in Rural, Suburban and Urban Teacher Job Satisfaction in the State of Florida. (Doctoral dissertation, Florida State University, 1988). ACC 8819149.

McGranahan, David. (Ed.). (1991). Education and Rural Economic Development: Strategies for the 1990's. Agriculture and Rural Economy Division, Economic Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture. Washington, D.C.

Nachtigal, Paul M. (1992). Toward the Construction of a Federal Policy Impact Code for Classifying the Nations Rural School Districts: A Response to Stephens, Reeder and Elder. Journal of Research in Rural Education,8 (3), 69-70.

Oliver, Jenny Penney & Howley, Craig. (1992). Charting New Map: Multicultural Education in Rural Schools. ERIC Digest No. EDO-RC-92-1. Manhattan, KS: Rural Clearinghouse for Lifelong Education and Development. ERIC/Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, Charleston, WV.

Reck, Carleen. (October, 1990). Successful Instructional Practices for Small Schools. (Digest No. ED0-RC-90-12). Jefferson City, MO: Superintendent of Schools. ERIC/Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, Charleston, WV.

Reeder, Richard J. (1992). An Analysis of Selected Economic, Social, and Fiscal Indicators for Nonmetropolitan School Classification Schemes. Journal of Research in Rural Education,8 (3), 29-46.

Rojewski, Jay W. (1992, Spring). Vocational Rehabilitation in Rural America: Challenges and Opportunities. American Rehabilitation, 39-42.

Schmuck, Richard A. & Schmuck, Patricia A. (1992). School Boards: Forging Links to Parents and Community in Small School Districts. Small Town,23 (1), 24-27.

Shimmons, Jonathan. (1993). Innovative Approaches in Rural Education. Rural Information Center Publication Series, No. 22. National Agriculture Library, United States Department of Agriculture. Beltsville, MD.

Smith, Q. W., Fasser, C. E., Wallace, S., Richards, L. K. & Potter, C. G. (1992). Children with Disabilities in Rural Areas: The Critical Role of the Special Education Teacher in Promoting Independence. Rural Special Education Quarterly,11 (1), 24-30.

Stephens, Robert E. (1992). Classifying Extraordinary State Policy Strategies for Assisting Rural School Districts. Journal of Research in Rural Education,8 (3), 32-46.

Stephens, Robert E. (1992). Mapping the Research Task for the Construction of a Federal System for Classifying the Nation's Rural School Districts. Journal of Research in Rural Education,8 (3), 3-28.

Stephens, E. R. & Perry, W. J. (1991). A Proposed Federal and State Policy Agenda for Rural Education in the Decade of the 1990's. in A. J. DeYoung (Ed.). Rural Education: Issues and Practices. New York: Garland Publishing, 333-394.

The Federal Interagency Committee on Education. (1989). An Agenda for Research and Development on Rural Education. Office of Educational Research and Improvement, United States Department of Education. Washington, D.C.

Van Alfen, Curtis. (1992). Policy as a Stimulant to Curricular Growth in Rural Education. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, Department of Educational Leadership, 310 McKay Building. ERIC/EDRS No. ED 354 133.

Van Alfen, Curtis. (1992). A Challenge for School Board's Leadership in Rural America. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University, Department of Educational Leadership, 310 McKay Building. ERIC/EDRS No. ED 354 134.

Verstegen, Deborah. (August, 1991). Funding Rural, Small Schools: Strategies at the Statehouse. (Digest No. EDO-RC-91-10). Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia. ERIC/Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, Charleston, WV.

Watson, Alma L. (1993). A Model for Training Early Childhood Special Educators in Rural Settings. Rural Special Education Quarterly, 12 (1), 15-22.

Wiggington, Elliot. (1985). Sometimes A Shining Moment. Garden City, NewYork: Anchor Press/Doubleday.